

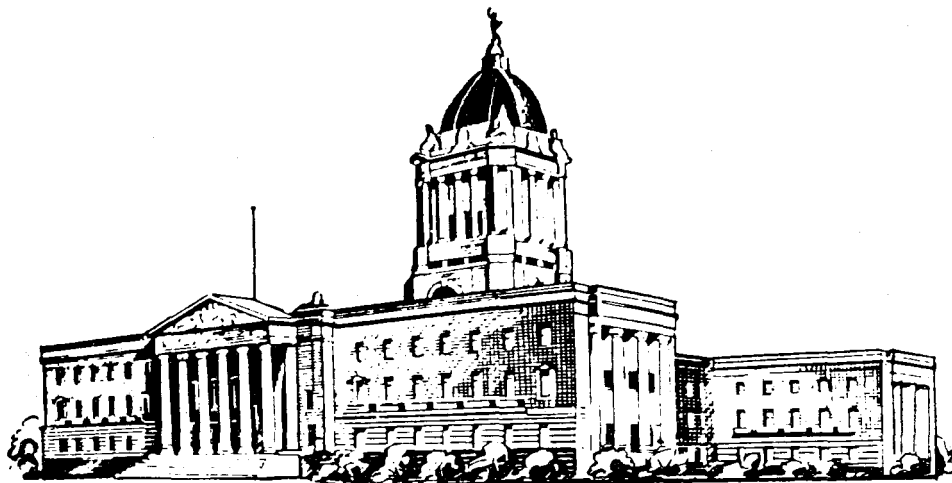


Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Speaker

The Honourable Peter Fox



Vol. XXI No. 3 2:30 p.m., Monday, February 4th, 1974. First Session, 30th Legislature

Printed by R. S. Evans — Queen's Printer for Province of Manitoba

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

2:30 o'clock, Monday, February 4, 1974

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees; Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports. The Honourable House Leader.

HON. SIDNEY GREEN Q. C. (Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management) (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to remind honourable members that the Committee of seven persons to form committees will be meeting immediately after proceedings are adjourned this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other ministerial statements? Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills; Oral Questions. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere). Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might have leave, since we've passed the item on the Order Paper, might have leave to lay on the table of the House the annual report of the Manitoba Hydro Electric Board.

MR. SPEAKER: (Agreed) The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK (Leader of the Official Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, my question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Could the Minister confirm that Dr. D. J. MacPhail has recently resigned from the Manitoba Health Services Commission?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. SAUL MILLER (Minister of Health and Social Development) (Seven Oaks): Yes, he resigned some time ago.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a second question to the Minister. I wonder if he could indicate to the House the reasons for Dr. MacPhail's resignation?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition should perhaps ask Dr. MacPhail.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can confirm, because I believe he is in receipt of a letter, that Dr. MacPhail resigned from the Commission in protest against government interference in the Commission's work?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the member has a copy. He can interpret that letter as he wishes, that's up to him.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister: Would he table the correspondence between Dr. MacPhail and the government?

MR. MILLER: An Order for Return on that, yes. If an Order for Return comes forward.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this is in the public domain and in view of the fact that this is important in connection with the matter, I hereby table the letter and the letter from the government to Dr. MacPhail, in the House.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for filing this information for the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. I. H. ASPER (Leader of the Liberal Party) (Wolseley): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Development Corporation. Would he confirm to the House that the plant operated by Misawa Homes in which the government is interested financially is still closed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that activities are at a minimum. I couldn't testify here as to the state of the lock on the door.

MR. ASPER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister indicate why the plant is closed?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, not accepting the assumption that the plant is closed, which I indicate I couldn't, I have indicated to, in response to public questions that both the Misawa Japan Limited and the Manitoba Development Corporation are presently, and have been for approximately six weeks, reviewing the status and future of the corporation and will be deciding as to the future I believe very shortly.

MR. ASPER: Will the Minister confirm that Misawa Homes has suffered a substantial monetary loss in its operations?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the position vis-a-vis Misawa Homes will be revealed at Economic Development Committee and all of the questions and answers could be asked more definitively at that time; but I can indicate, Mr. Speaker, that there was no projection in the opening of the operations that there would not be a loss suffered in the first year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister for Northern Affairs. Could the Minister inform the House with respect to the winter road building program which roads are completed and which ones are incomplete, and also which are being built on schedule?

MR. SPEAKER: Order Please. Order Please. I do believe the honourable member would be well advised to make an Order for Return for that detailed information. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister if he would inform the House as to the general status of the winter road program in the north at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. RON MCBRYDE (Minister for Northern Affairs)(The Pas): Mr. Speaker, some roads are complete, some roads are nearly complete and a couple of roads are behind schedule.

MR. JOHNSTON: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister advise the House as to which roads are incomplete and are behind schedule?

MR. MCBRYDE: I'm not sure whether the member asked for all the roads or just the ones that are behind schedule. The road from Ilford to Oxford House, to God's Narrows is behind schedule and the road to Island Lake, Wasagamach, Red Sucker is behind schedule.

MR. JOHNSTON: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister inform the House if regardless of whether or not the roads are completed that the contract price will be paid, as was the case last year?

MR. MCBRYDE: Not commenting on the latter part of the question which I am not sure is correct, Mr. Speaker, the price will be paid for work completed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct a question to the Minister of Health & Social Development. On January 25th his department issued a press release indicating that the first cheques for the interim period of July 1st to December 1st on the Pharmacare Program are being mailed out - the refund cheques - can he indicate now or undertake to indicate - give the House the information as to the actual amount of dollars this program will involve in the first six months of their operations?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SAUL MILLER: Mr. Speaker, this is the interim period. We have no idea how many are applying and will be applying. The scheme actually is such that they could have waited until June which is the end of the year but we made it flexible so that people could apply effective January 1st if their drug bills exceeded a certain amount of money, and I think that is what the member is asking. I don't think that information will be available for quite a few weeks yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the First Minister. Can he advise what impact there will be on the prices of natural gas to the domestic consumers in Manitoba as a result of the Alberta decision on wellhead prices?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Minister of Industry and Commerce) (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I believe the First Minister took a similar question as notice last Friday. That matter is now under review and we will be making a statement shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the First Minister. In view of the concern of the Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member from Riel on the issue just raised, would the First Minister consider sending as a one man delegation to meet with his Conservative counterpart, the Leader of the Opposition?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister responsible for Housing and Renewal Corporation please. In light of the statement made by the

(MR. AXWORTHY Cont'd) President of the Lumbermen's Association that the cost of building materials in the prairie region was increased by 20 percent this year, will the government give consideration to either reducing or removing the sales tax on building materials in the Province of Manitoba in the forthcoming year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the member probably isn't aware but should be aware that this is a matter of policy.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM (Ste. Rose): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Industry and Commerce

MR. SPEAKER: Order Please. Order Please. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge have a supplementary?

MR. AXWORTHY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister then consider increasing the grants or subsidies of the homeowner grant that's presently available, to cover these increased in cost?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, if the member is talking about the housing at MHRC, I'm not quite sure what the subsidy would be.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I gather at the present moment the government is offering a homeowner grant and subsidy for first time homeowners.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: You know, Mr. Speaker, again this is a taxation matter and there's two elements of it, the federal sales tax - provincial sales tax. Both are policy matters to be decided by both governments and therefore I cannot answer that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was for the Minister of Industry and Commerce. I would like to ask him, in view of the fact that the Air Transport Committee has discontinued air service to Dauphin and Yorkton could he advise if he has made any representations to the Federal Government on behalf of 150, 000 people?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Manitoba Government has filed a formal petition with the Federal Cabinet asking that the Federal Cabinet reverse the decision of the Air Transport Committee. We have as yet not received a reply to our request but only a week or ten days ago I spoke to the Minister of Transportation and asked him to give this matter early and favourable consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: To the First Minister, Mr. Speaker. Is it government policy to list in the Manitoba Telephone Book under the heading "Government of Manitoba" the political offices of the New Democratic Party in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of that particular listing and I'll have to make inquiries.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: If the First Minister is taking the matter as notice to make inquiries would he also take as notice the question: No. 1. Who paid for the listing of the Brandon NDP Office on page 76 of the 1973-1974 Manitoba Telephone Book wherein third column it appears, "Government of Manitoba - Industry and Commerce Department" and three lines down it says, "NDP Southwest Regional Office telephone so and so." And would he also take as notice, Mr. Speaker, the question, that if it was paid for at public expense would the same facility be made available to all political parties in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: Order Please. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, if in fact that is the case I would think that the second part follows logically. I've undertaken to look into the matter but I understand that the Minister of Industry and Commerce has some information now with respect to at least part of that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. This matter was drawn to our attention by the Brandon

(MR. EVANS Cont'd) Sun some months ago and upon investigation we discovered that the staff of the Manitoba Telephone System made an honest error; and, Mr. Speaker, the officials of the Manitoba Telephone System issued a public statement indicating that this was an error on the part of the staff of the MTS.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Honourable First Minister who in response to the Leader of the Liberal Party indicated that it could be corrected by inclusion of the other parties under the same heading. Does he not believe that two wrongs don't make a right or three wrongs don't make a right?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, that certainly is true. Question might arise however as to what form of equivalency or parody of treatment is most practical in any given circumstance. In any case, I hope and trust that the reply given by the Minister of Industry and Commerce does explain at least part of the question and as I've already undertaken to inquire into the rest.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. JEAN PAUL MARION (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed at the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. There has been recently a new classification introduced for business in the Autopac rates and in essence it spells a 30 to 40 percent increase

MR. SPEAKER: Order Please. Would the honourable gentleman place his question?

MR. MARION: The question is: when this new category was introduced was there a study made to reveal that there was a loss in this category?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Autopac.

HON. BILLIE URUSKI (Minister Responsible for Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation) (St. George): The rate that was introduced for business use is no different than had been the case prior to Autopac but the losses incurred in this area of vehicles that are subjected to more road use as is in the case of business individuals that's where this rate was established.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. MARION: My supplementary question on the same subject, Mr. Speaker, is, the Minister responsible has noted that the rates notwithstanding the increase were still much below

MR. SPEAKER: Question please.

MR. MARION: Are the rates in the classification of business in this province still far below those in the other provinces, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. URUSKI: They are.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of the Public Insurance Corporation. Can we take from his statement that the rates paid by Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba Telephone System and other business oriented Crown Corporations are now as low as they were before Autopac was introduced?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. URUSKI: I'll take the question as notice to find out exactly what they were paying.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture, and ask him if he has made any request to the Minister in Ottawa, Mr. Lang, who is responsible for the Wheat Board, requesting an interim payment on wheat, oats and barley immediately.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture)(Lac du Bonnet): Yes, Mr. Speaker, many of us have over the last month or two.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: A second question, Mr. Speaker. Could he indicate the amount of money that he is requesting on the three different grains that I mentioned?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: I don't recollect, Mr. Speaker, whether any figures were mentioned but I do know that there is a substantial amount of money in the hands of the Canadian Wheat Board

(MR. USKIW Cont'd) which should be paid out as soon as possible, and I gather from a report reporting the comments of the Minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board that he was considering at this moment doing just that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I should like to ask for a correction, by leave of the House, correction in Votes and Proceedings of today in relation to some questions that I posed on the Order Paper on page 25 to 29. In each case the correction that I would like made is, "What has been the number of appointments made by the Department of the Executive Council since January 1st, 1971, under Section 2 (1), and in brackets it says "c". It should read (e) iii."

In each case if that correction can be made in Hansard, Sir, the question would make a lot more sense in that particular respect.

Secondly, Sir, I believe that it would be appropriate, and I may ask the House Leader if he could confirm this request of mine, that in each case when a question is placed for the ministry that the name of the person asking the question should appear alongside the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I take it that that is in your domain, but we certainly have no objection here.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. GREEN: I'm sure it will lead to more questions on behalf of my honourable friend, the Member for Morris . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, it is customary for all members who participate in this debate to extend congratulations to the Speaker on his or her election; and this I readily do, not simply as a matter of tradition, but because of the high regard in which I hold your office. I believe that the respect shown the Speaker by all honourable members can only contribute to strengthening the authority and independence of the Speaker. And that authority and that independence of the Speaker, particularly his independence of the government of the day, are the essential qualities of the Speakership in the contemporary parliamentary system; for only when the Speakership is possessed of those qualities can the traditional rights of all members, but especially those who constitute the minority, be preserved and protected. The burden on the Speaker therefore is a very great one, and in your demanding and challenging tasks of maintaining order and ensuring that the rules are fairly and impartially applied, you shall have the unstinting support of those honourable members who constitute Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

I should like to as well at this time extend a word of congratulations to the members newly elected to this House. However long one is here, you never forget the sense of honour you feel at having received the confidence of your fellow citizens, and that sense is I think particularly keen for the new members. I am pleased to welcome them all. Mr. Speaker, I think you'll understand if I express a special word of congratulations to the mover and to the seconder of the address, and if I express particular pleasure at the presence of the new members for Rhineland, St. James and La Verendrye, of whom we shall hear much in the months and years that lie ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I would wish as well to pay tribute of a somewhat different kind, to the late Rosalind Blauer, who was prior to her death a senior member of the Planning and Priorities Secretariat. Dr. Blauer was a distinguished economist with a brilliant career before her. Her death was I know a severe blow to the government as well as to her family and her many friends.

At this, the opening of the 30th Legislature, we would be remiss if we did not note that our capital city this year observes its one hundredth anniversary as a city. The Winnipeg Centennial, besides providing many happy opportunities for reminiscence and for stock-taking,

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd) should also provide an opportunity for Winnipeggers, and indeed all Manitobans, to reflect on and take pleasure in the very great contributions that this city and its citizens have made, not only to the province and to the region but to Canada as a whole; for if Winnipeg has always been a provincial and regional capital, it has not been merely a provincial city. Its horizons have always been wide and its contributions to the political, cultural and athletic life of the country have been immense. The centennial celebrations therefore are something to which all members can look forward.

While the honourable members, Mr. Speaker, are in a benign mood, it would seem appropriate as well to make mention of certain changes in ministry that have taken place since the general election. As a result of the election we have occasion to extend congratulations to the Honourable Members for Osborne and St. George on their elevation to the Cabinet. We on this side, Mr. Speaker, sincerely wish them success in their new responsibilities, though we cannot wish with equal sincerity that they will discharge those responsibilities for very long.

Of the more recent Cabinet changes, I shall have further comment to make later on, but initially I would make one observation: the changes if welcome, are nonetheless long overdue. We must hope that the Honourable Member for Springfield will be unable to do as much damage in his new department as in the old. We must hope that the new Minister of Health and Social Development can bring under control the chaos generated by his predecessor. And finally we must hope that the Minister of Urban Affairs will see the perils of being a Jack of all Trades and a Master of None.

I wish now to turn to other matters. My remarks today I regret to say will not be without criticism, but I should like in turning to these other matters to comment on several proposals in the Throne Speech which in general terms we consider worthy of sympathetic consideration.

The Throne Speech does contain several proposals or references to existing programs which at first glance appear worthy of merit. We will consider sympathetically proposals to extend legal aid. We heartily support measures aimed at providing specialized services for handicapped children throughout the province. We look forward with interest to the details of proposals to index social allowances, though to be frank we would also welcome measures to bring inflation under control, thereby making such indexing less urgent. Equally, we would welcome measures that would encourage social allowance recipients to seek and take employment. We await with interest proposals relating to care for the mentally ill. We shall I hope find it possible to support proposals on denticare, having ourselves advanced such proposals as far back as 1971 and 1972 for children under 16. We will view sympathetically the proposed grants to new homeowners. We look forward with considerable interest to proposals that may be brought forward relating to urban transportation, though, Mr. Speaker, we hope that such proposals will take account of the tremendously complicated problems of the total urban environment. And we shall, Mr. Speaker, as well look for initiatives and offer suggestions regarding northern transportation as an equally urgent call on the attention of the government.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we look forward with great pleasure and anticipation to hearing the Premier's first hand account of his personal contributions of the failure of two recent federal-provincial conferences.

It has I say, Mr. Speaker, I regret to say at least, taken me but a few moments to mention the positive things in a speech which it took His Honour 25 minutes to read. There are two reasons for that: the first is that the remainder of the speech contains a number of proposals whose merits are by no means immediately self-evident. The second, Mr. Speaker, is that most of the speech is puffery. I conclude that much of it originated in the press releases of the Information Services; that driver testing will be extended to northern communities, with or without roads, is laudable, but not of such moment as to warrant calling the Assembly into session to hear. Other sections I assume - I want the Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources to remember that statement -- but not of such moment, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to warrant calling the Assembly into session. Some, Mr. Speaker, sections I assume were extracted from the annual reports of the departments -- and some very old annual reports at that. Still others, parts of the Speech, reflect the generosity of the Hudson's Bay Company and have little to do with the policies of the government.

Mr. Speaker, this speech, with a few exceptions to which I shall return, is notable

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd) . . . chiefly for what it does not say. And indeed it says so little of consequence it makes one wonder whether the government knows why it called us into session, and earlier than usual at that. We, of course, are required to approve the estimates so the government may pay its ever-mounting bills, but it might have been more honest, Mr. Speaker, in that case to have reduced the Speech to the three final paragraphs.

I have talked to no one in the last three days, Mr. Speaker, who does not agree that the Throne Speech was bland and innocuous. I do not say that the Speech is without its defenders or apologists. I have talked to several people who say, certainly it's bland, certainly it's meaningless, but this is a post-election, you can't expect major activity every session; isn't it reasonable for a government to save the important measures for a session closer to the next election? Well, Mr. Speaker, I say it is not reasonable. The hard, simple, bitter facts of our situation is that we cannot afford a do-nothing session. We are facing urgent problems in this province, and here we are confronted with a complacent, status quo Throne Speech. The government employs "you've never had it so good" language; it trots out crude growth statistics which it used to denounce as meaningless. It would have us believe that everything is so rosy that nothing need be done but commission yet some further reports to defer more action until some time in the future. Well, Sir, you ask the housewife as she goes into the grocery store whether she feels that we can afford a do-nothing session; you ask the drivers of this province now receiving their increased autopac bills whether they want a do-nothing session; you ask the homeowners facing increased rates for electricity, oil and natural gas whether he wants a do-nothing session; you ask those who have a direct stake in penal reform, in educational reform, in the native peoples and the legal system, whether they are content with a do-nothing session; you ask those who want slogans about open government to end, and open government to start; you ask them whether they agree that you can't have major legislation in this session. Their answer will be a resounding no; their answer will be that these problems are urgent; their answer will be that what on earth is this government and this Assembly doing, and paid to do, if not to deal with these urgent problems, problems that to a large extent, Mr. Speaker, have been initiated by the government themselves. Individuals aside, I have never been an admirer of this government, but even I am staggered by the utter and absolute insensitivity of this government and its friends, to the urgency of our situation, to the immediacy of our problems. I am astonished moreover by what appears to be their priorities.

We are in the midst of the most vicious inflation of our generation. We are burdened by unprecedented levels of taxation - and I put aside for the moment debate over how those levels compare with other provinces. They are beyond dispute, Mr. Speaker, the highest taxes Manitobans have ever faced. And about these subjects the Throne Speech is utterly silent. Even David Lewis and Tommy Douglas, the Premier's guardian angels, even they talk about the cost of living, without of course doing the one thing in their power that might have some effect. At least, Mr. Speaker, they talk about it. But the gentlemen opposite say nothing: their credo might be see no evil, hear no evil, and do no good.

Well, why has this happened, Mr. Speaker? I would suggest several reasons. It's been common knowledge in this building for several months that this government emerged shell-shocked from the election, and has been a rudderless, shell-shocked government ever since. --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, the sense of this has not been confined - the sense of this has not been confined to the government's critics. Many supporters of the NDP are conscious of it, and several generally friendly pundits and commentators have drawn attention to it.

There is in medicine a disease known as progeria. Some honourable members may know of it as a rare disease that involves rapid and premature aging, a disease in which very young children show all the symptoms of old age. Happily this dreaded and terrible disease is rare. Opposite however, Mr. Speaker, we witness a political medical first: the first case of a government collectively in the grip of progeria; a government old, senile and mindless at the age of four and a half.

Beyond that however, this government has fallen prey to something else. It has passed the stage of being able to blame everything it does on the previous administration. It has now got to the point where every action or inaction is defended as being consistent with the practices of the previous government. They have a mindless fear of confronting real issues, of doing important things for the first time. Instead, Mr. Speaker, they create phony issues and they

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd) show their boldness by grappling non-problems by the throat. Mr. Speaker, I daresay I could fire a shotgun across this Chamber and not hit one member who has of personal experience reason for wanting the state involved in fire insurance, and I will return to that matter again. But I ask the honourable gentlemen opposite this question: do they really believe that the average man and woman in this province, as they think about the problems they face, are thinking about fire insurance? Would not common sense suggest that the cost of sugar, the cost of beef, the cost of clothing, the cost of education, the cost of taxation, of fuel, of housing, of autopac - aren't these the things that are really concerning real people in the real world? (Applause) I don't know what kind of world the Ministers opposite inhabit. Most people are worrying about pay cheques that buy less and less; these men are hung up on whether getting the state into fire insurance will advance the socialist millenium.

The average man and woman in this province, Mr. Speaker, find it necessary to show restraint in their personal lives and in their personal finances. Inflation and taxation have made that simply unavoidable. This government, however, labours under the illusion that it shows restraint merely by refraining from introducing new programs. We might infer, Mr. Speaker, that the government does not intend to double its spending in the next four years as it did in the last. But true restraint, Mr. Speaker, is more than that. It involves a realization of a need and a willingness to eliminate unnecessary expenditure, to see that necessary expenditures are serving the purposes for which they were intended, and to return to the people tax moneys raised in excess of the province's requirements. By all these yardsticks, this government and this Throne Speech are wanting.

The present government has never understood, Mr. Speaker, that there is no absolute link between reform and spending public money. We would eagerly examine proposals for educational reforms and for penal reform; we would eagerly support measures designed to provide equality for women in the civil service and to eliminate the sexist bias in a great number of provincial statutes; we would eagerly support measures to improve the position of the native peoples with respect to the police, the courts, and the legal and judicial process. These would be the tests of reform, Mr. Speaker, and taken as a group it does not follow that reforms in these areas represent a drain on the public purse. But on these matters as on so much else of substance, there is a deafening silence. We may, I hope, get some action on these matters before 1977, but I submit, Sir, that Manitoba is being asked to suffer the price of inaction because this government already knows it's on its last term. --(Interjection)--

In the last few years, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. PAULLEY: You're still in doubt, you're still in doubt over there.

MR. SPIVAK: . . . a few men have seen, and a great many more have sensed an on-coming crisis in western industrialized society. In ways that seem remarkable to us all, these fears and crises have accelerated and risen to the boil in the last few months. I think I do not exaggerate, Mr. Speaker, when I say that in the past few months, a pall of uncertainty has settled upon this country and upon this province. That uncertainty touches each of us in one way or another. It costs more to eat today and we don't know if we will have jobs tomorrow. We wish to educate our children for tomorrow, but we see highly educated unemployed today. We wish to save, but we see the values of our savings eroded by inflation. We wish to invest, but we cannot be sure that actions by governments at home or abroad will make investments either secure or profitable. We look to governments for initiative and leadership and protection, yet we fear their inefficiency, their secretiveness, their authoritarianism, and their potential for corruption. We face in short, Mr. Speaker, a malaise of the most daunting kind, because it is one in which so many of the values and the assumptions of the past are challenged and one in which once secure foundations seem mired in sand and above and through all of this, of course, is the ever present fear of economic crisis. We must face the fact that for the first time in thirty years many people, sane and sensible people, fear not merely a recession but economic depression.

The comforting view of the post-Keynesian age that "governments will never allow another depression" sounds a trifle less confident now than it did even five or ten years ago.

I do not say these things, Mr. Speaker, to be an alarmist, still less a defeatist. I cannot imagine that in 1974 any man or woman would be in politics without some confidence that we are capable of devising policies to confront the challenges before us.

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd)

I do paint the sombre picture, however, because I think it is important to understand the context in which all policies of all governments must be placed and judged. In saying that, I clearly recognize the limitations that circumstances place on any Canadian or Manitoba government; but having said that we operate under severe restraints, it becomes all the more imperative that public policy in Manitoba seek solutions as widely and broadly as it is possible within the fields in which they operate. And it is on this basis, Sir, that I respectfully and regretfully submit that the present government has failed and is failing to do the things that are within its power and which are vitally necessary at this time.

The government has now been in office for four and one half years. It is no longer a new government. It can no longer shirk responsibilities by pleading inexperience or citing the alleged failures of the Roblin and Weir administrations. This government now has a record of its own; it has had time to devise a program of its own; it has had the opportunity to develop and articulate a vision of Manitoba that would be its own. It may be cruel fate, Mr. Speaker, that it must now stand to be judged at a time of great national unease; but for the Manitoba component of that unease, this government, and this government alone, must accept responsibility. And judged on the basis of the performance in the past, and on the basis of the Speech from the Throne, I conclude, Mr. Speaker, that this government is not, and will not prove, equal to the challenges I have described.

On June 28th, this government limped home. Except for occasional forays by Ministers . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. SPIVAK: . . . out of the province or into confrontations, apart from that, inertia has since descended upon the government. Except for the controversies caused by harassing hog producers, or doctors, or civil servants, or changing locks on the bathroom door, one would think on the evidence that this government has gone into limbo.

A MEMBER: They've got red lights now too, they tell us.

MR. SPIVAK: Of course the relative silence of some ministers is something for which we should all give thanks because when the Minister of Industry and Commerce speaks, for example, we are usually losing a good industry or investing in a bad one. But however low one pitches one's expectations of this government, its performance since June is consistently worse. Apart perhaps from the First Minister himself, there is hardly a person who spends his days in this building, who still believes that the First Minister is really in charge of this government. The question, however, is this: Is anyone in charge? and will the real Premier of Manitoba stand up?

If there is someone directing this government, will he identify himself? If there is any one over there who knows what the policy is and who is making it, please stand. Does anyone opposite care? There are moments, Mr. Speaker, when one feels that Manitoba is as close to being without a government as is legally and constitutionally possible.

The fact that we face, Mr. Speaker, is that this government is not governing. And that, Mr. Speaker, is one of our primary quarrels with the government, and one of our major regrets about the Speech from the Throne.

Many of the problems in which the government now finds itself stem from the fact that confronted with a choice between ideology and reality they are often incapable of seeing beyond their ideological blinkers. Their insistence on involving government in business, to the ultimate impoverishment of both, is a case in point.

Increasingly, however, the failures of this government go beyond philosophical or ideological questions and rest more and more on questions of simple competence. They precipitate crises where they need not exist; they stagger from one mess to another, leaving a trail of confusion, chaos and ill-feeling behind them. We have been through a costly and unnecessary crisis with the doctors; we see repeated and apparently irresistible attempts to interfere, control, and direct the affairs of the individuals; we now face the prospect of government in the fire insurance industry. Is the government seriously telling us that such things are necessary; that these are where the problems of the society lie; that the expenditure of time, and energy and money in these matters are really central to the main problems of our society? We have seen a persistent program of politicizing the civil service, of squandering tens of millions of

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd) dollars through mismanagement of hydro, and of drawing a veil of secrecy across the operations of government. Are we to believe that this is a credible approach to the problems of our province?

The central concerns of Manitobans, as I have already suggested, are the spiralling cost of living, the burden of taxation, overspending in government and a growing concern about energy and resource management, and the economic, social and political costs that they may entail. With few exceptions, Mr. Speaker, these have not been the concerns of the government and where those exceptions are admitted, the policies of the government have worsened rather than alleviated the problems. They usually identify the wrong problem, or a non-problem to solve, and then mismanage it - as an old farmer friend of mine often says, in a quarter section in which there were only two cow flaps, this government would step in both of them.

The evidence abounds, Mr. Speaker, on every hand that this is a government without a clear purpose, without a clear principle, and increasingly this is a government without a guiding hand, unless perhaps it is that of the Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that what we are witnessing is the gradual exposure of a party that lived on rhetoric during its long years in opposition; that benefitted for several years from the public's willingness to give a new government a chance, and that campaigned in the election by trying to pretend and to present its leader as a cross between Sir Galahad and Santa Claus. Now, however, comes the day of reckoning, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier it turns out is neither a knight nor an elf, but a modern Mother Hubbard who finds the cupboard contains no policies.

Having no program, having no policy, and having discovered that the Premier's coattails are wearing thin, the gentlemen opposite suddenly find themselves confronted with the need to govern this province. The fact that they must do it and yet are unprepared to do it, has had a demoralizing effect on them. They call to one's mind that vivid description Benjamin Disraeli offered of the British Government over 100 years ago:

"As I sat opposite the Treasury Bench, the ministers reminded me of one of those landscapes common on the coasts of South America. You behold a range of exhausted volcanoes. Not a flame flickers on a single pallid crest. But the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes and ever and anon the dark rumblings of the sea."

This is what we behold, Mr. Speaker. There are the dark rumblings and the occasional earthquakes, but basically these honourable gentlemen who spent years in opposition trumpeting the Kingdom of Heaven, who thought that rhetoric would set society on the march, or on its ear, whose ideas would revolutionize an age and transform the province, who had a solution to every problem, and indeed, Mr. Speaker, a problem for every solution, there they sit: spent volcanoes. There is scarcely a thing that they have done that was not pioneered in some other province, and usually at far less cost in money, and time and goodwill.

I have already said that the primary problems of our society are inflation and the cost of living. We believe that these problems are aggravated by government taxation rates generally, and by high rates in this province in particular. The provincial taxing and spending are contributing to inflation, or that they are contributing to inflation, Mr. Speaker, is indeed now the view of Professor Weldon who, I may remind you, was at one time one of the chief economic advisers to this government.

Within its constitutional competence we charge this government, not only with failure to pursue policies to slow this process down, but in fact we charge that its policies have almost without exception speeded that process up. Instead of insulating us to whatever extent possible from national trends through their fiscal policies, they have made us far more vulnerable than we should or need be.

Having got us this far, we cannot expect a sudden reversal on the part of the government. We do, however, urge that they facilitate an urgent and intensive examination of the impact of taxation on the inflationary spiral and that they give urgent consideration to a number of proposals which I shall indicate at the close of my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, we have a failure of policy. But that is not all. Evidence of the failure of administration abounds on all sides. I do not propose to weary this House with the depressing catalogue; to pose but a few questions, however, is to suggest the magnitude of the problem.

Why, Mr. Speaker, has it been necessary for the reorganization of the Departments of Mines and Natural Resources and Industry and Commerce to become an annual event?

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd)

Why Mr. Speaker is it necessary to camouflage the operations of Crown agencies such as Autopac and Manitoba Hydro?

Why Mr. Speaker, is there not one of the 13 companies purchased by the M. D. C. that is not operating at a loss?

Why is it not possible to have the full and frank information about the operations of these companies?

Why are we unable to have full disclosure of the aims and operations of the Information Communication program which appears increasingly as a propaganda agency for this government?

Why was the 1973 General Election marked by the greatest number of irregularities of any election in modern Manitoba history?

Mr. Speaker, why is the planning function in Health and Social Development divided between the Department itself, HESP, Planning and Priorities, the MHSC, and heaven knows how many other bodies?

Why has the government operated in a state of hit and run warfare with its own civil service for the last two years?

Why has the Day Care Centre program announced a year ago not been brought into operation?

Why has the Guaranteed Annual Income project announced several years ago not been started?

How many of the twenty Community Health Centres announced several years ago are now in operation giving high quality care and saving taxpayers money?

And, Mr. Speaker, who is planning the planning?

In the light of such failures both of policy and administration they have now the gall to come and ask authority to embark further into new fields. They won't tell us a fraction of what we should know about their present operations, but they expect us readily to see those tentacle-like operations expanded.

Let us consider, Mr. Speaker, for example, the government's approach to the question of insurance, to which vague reference is made in the Throne Speech.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, it is extremely questionable that this government has any mandate whatsoever to proceed with any proposal at all. Now I am aware that the subject of fire insurance was alluded to by the NDP spokesmen during the election campaign, but I am also aware that the deficit in Autopac was concealed from the public during that campaign. And I submit, Sir, that had the knowledge of that deficit, along with the exposure of the misleading assurances of the Premier and the Honourable Member for Selkirk, been made public during that election, that election results might well have been different.

Beyond questioning their mandate however, we have a number of other questions. What kinds of insurance besides fire insurance are being considered? What studies have preceded and justified their proposals? What kinds of complaints with the present situation can be documented? What guarantees will we have that fire insurance revenues will not be used to camouflage future Autopac deficits? How long would the Premier promise to stabilize rates in any new insurance program? And how quickly will he break or forget such promises? If the government can show abuse, can show inefficiency, can show positive advantage, it might yet persuade us, but on the present evidence and on past performance we are skeptical. We suspect that this is simply another case of this government wishing to control and direct. We believe that our doubts about this are shared by the overwhelming majority of Manitobans. We are not convinced that there is a problem here to which the government's proposal is a solution. We are not convinced, indeed, Mr. Speaker, that there is a problem here to justify the distraction from the much more pressing problems before this House and before this province.

Mr. Speaker, consider the question of policy in the north. I will not pretend that the government has done nothing for what imagination it has shown, and may yet show, I applaud them. But my enthusiasm for their programs in northern Manitoba is tempered by some cold and rather unpleasant facts.

The first is that the government spending jumped remarkably, with little evidence of policy-making in an election year. Buying electors with their own money is not a practice

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd)

invented by this government, but they cannot on the basis of it, sit back and pretend to have a policy.

Secondly, as it is becoming increasingly clear to anyone who visits the north regularly, more and more people in the north are people on the public payroll. I submit, Sir, that in the main, this practice has one end above all others, the entrenchment of the New Democratic Party in northern Manitoba. Many of the people in question are there attempting to perform serious and important services for the North but their numbers are swollen by a great many others who are little more than NDP organizers being paid out of the public purse.

This is reprehensible in itself. It is even more so for its effects on those non-political civil servants in the area. Many of them are now operating in an atmosphere of fear, fear that questioning or criticism will place their jobs in jeopardy. It is a deplorable situation, Mr. Speaker, and one that I would never have believed could occur in this province. Apart from this flagrant abuse of power, however, the government's failure here is similar to its failure in other areas. It has no vision of the north, no notion of how the north will develop. It has no comprehensive and coordinated approach to the north as a region and a case in point is the inertia in the government's approach to the Pan Arctic pipeline.

The north, to Manitoba, represents what the west represented to Canada 70 years ago. It has great potential, such perhaps as to alter the character of this province but vis-a-vis the south, it faces more serious problems than the west ever faced. One of its earliest industries trapping and fishing is now clearly in decline; another, pulp and paper, is at or near its maximum development; only its mineral and energy resources remain in substantial quantity, and even they are not inexhaustible. On the evidence available, the government has given little thought to the middle and long-term situation of a population that is getting larger on a resource base that is getting smaller. The test of public policy in the North, Mr. Speaker, will be to see that the northern resources are developed in a way and at a pace that will allow for the development of an infrastructure capable of supporting at least the present population. That does not necessarily entail rapid development of resources that are limited, but it should preclude rhetoric and policy which positively discourages such development at the expense of both the public and the private sector. Government must work with the private sector to see that resource development is planned and coordinated in such a way as to combine reasonable return to the private sector while protecting and developing the public interest and the social resources of the northern community. On the record to date, I see little reason to believe that this government is capable either of working with the private sector or of recognizing the public interest. Nothing in the Throne Speech suggests otherwise.

Much of our present and future well-being as a province is tied up with the contribution of the north and its people. That contribution can only be realized if the Manitoba community as a whole recognizes the special problems and requirements of that region. There must be equal treatment by government and equal access to government; northerners must be able to enjoy the freedoms of communication and transportation enjoyed by other Manitobans; they must have shelter that is adequate to the conditions of their lives; and fiscal and tax policies must reflect the special cost of living burdens under which northerners now live and governments must ensure security of employment and income.

Now what I've touched on, Mr. Speaker, with respect to northern resources, leads inevitably to the question of energy and resource management more generally. I think it is fair to say that most people in this country are confused by the complexities of the energy crisis; that is hardly surprising for the issues are complicated and the claims and counter-claims of government, of oil companies, of ecologists, scientists and consumers have left the people baffled. And as the recent Ottawa Conference made clear, it also left many of our political leaders baffled - and from the standpoint of the public interest, that is an alarming development.

I would, however, Mr. Speaker, submit that there are several propositions on which there would be widespread public agreement.

First, that public fears are increasingly about supply and therefore about price to the consumer - whether in Eastern Canada or in Manitoba.

Secondly, that there is a growing awareness that properly managed and rationally distributed, this nation's energy resources could ensure national self-sufficiency for some time to come.

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Con't)

Thirdly, that it is possible and imperative to assert the national interest over foreign interests, and the primacy of the public interest over the private.

And fourthly, that the proposition that applies to energy sources apply, with only slight variation, to the whole range of non-renewable mineral resources. Fossil fuels may be the source of concern now but the time may not be far off when it will be copper or nickel or other wisely-used industrial metals.

There is an urgent need, therefore, to so devise a policy that the Canadian consumers' interest comes first. We have not anything approaching a realistic inventory of the resources of this province, and still less, any sense of the speed of depletion assuming that current rates are maintained. We have, however, as the Premier has said on energy, a responsibility to future generations as well as to the present one.

Our natural resources are a public trust, owned by the people of this province. It follows from this that the rate of development and the royalty to the public must be determined by the government, but that that determination of the royalty must take into account two factors: whether it will affect the rate of development in ways that are consistent with public policy, and whether the royalty will be at a level that will provide the incentive for continuing private sector investment.

The question of royalty rates is complex, but those rates should be flexible in ways that will encourage the private sector, Mr. Speaker, to undertake processing in this province, with the spur to secondary industry, new jobs and a more lasting infrastructure that this would entail.

At the federal-provincial conference, the Premier of Manitoba is, or should be, the advocate of Manitoba's interests. At the recent energy conference the Premier espoused the cause of a stronger federal presence; accepted without protest decisions which could only result in higher prices for Manitoba. I ask him, therefore, that he accept the definition of his role as the advocate of the Manitoba interest. Can he honestly and consistently say that he pursued that interest and resisted decisions prejudicial to those interests? Is it his view that the price increases are in the national interest? Are these increased prices in the provincial interest? Does he think that only the people in Eastern Canada dislike price increases?

I consider that the government's performance and rhetoric are at variance with a rational approach to this question. Through the Kierans Report and other ministerial statements, a climate of uncertainty has been created about resource development and management in this province. Through its mishandling of Manitoba Hydro it has, or ought to have, created grave doubts about its competence to manage our resources.

In this time of crisis over energy, the hydro-electric resources of this province assume far greater importance than ever before, both to Manitobans and Canadians at large.

In recent months, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister has wrapped himself in a mantle of virtue by pretending that thanks to his foresight, Manitobans are insulated against the worst effects of the energy crisis. Mr. Speaker, that is nonsense. It is now a well-recognized fact that Manitoba Hydro was allowed by the present government to proceed with wasteful, imprudent developments for the sole purpose of saving the political face of the government. The utility, which for sixty years operated with the maximum benefit to Manitobans as its first priority, is no longer a public utility but is firmly entrenched as a politically motivated instrument of the New Democratic Party. The result—the particular result of the Cass-Beggs legacy has been clear for some time: there have been remarkable misjudgments and projects of the highest order of benefit have been delayed, and those of doubtful and negative benefit were advanced. The cost of these and other mistakes have been an increase in capital expenditures in the order of a quarter of a billion dollars accompanied by a net decrease in power system capability and benefit. And so far as we can tell, the rate of expenditure is still increasing.

We on this side and the public at large have been persistently denied the information to which we are entitled. The Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management has recently said, regarding the firing of Mr. Ault, that he will decide how much the public is entitled to know. Now I give him top marks for his candor. His position is clear, succinct and arrogant. His credo is the government's credo and a Minister in Spain or in Cuba or in Chile could not put it better. And on hydro this has been the policy.

The First Minister, however, has on the hydro question admitted a shadow and a vestige

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Con't). . . of doubt. During the election campaign he promised that the facts would be made plain. Speaking on the twelfth of June in Winnipeg Beach he promised a judicial inquiry into the Nelson River Project. Mr. Speaker, we now call for that judicial inquiry.

In the last sixty years, this province has been governed by Conservatives, Liberals, Progressives and Liberal-Progressives. Never in all those administrations was hydro made a political instrument of the government of the day. Never was it embroiled in such controversies. Never has it had to seek the price increases to cover the ineptitude of its political masters. Never, that is, until the last four years. You know, the government may shrug its shoulders and, Mr. Speaker, blame escalating costs; it may shrug its shoulders and say it's all a coincidence. Well, Mr. Speaker, if that is all it amounts to, we challenge the government to set up the judicial inquiry the First Minister has promised. Let an impartial, non-partisan inquiry examine the administration of Hydro, the studies and documents relating to Lake Winnipeg regulation and Jenpeg, and the financial aspects of the whole undertaking. Such an inquiry could help avert the further mistakes, Mr. Speaker, that await us at the next turn.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking of the North and now in speaking of Hydro, I have alluded to the misuses of public funds for the purpose of the party in power. I regret the need to pursue the theme.

The honourable members who served in the last House will know that during this debate a year ago, and on other occasions, I voiced alarm at the politicization of the civil service that has taken place under this government. I have used the word 'politicize' advisedly because we are not witnessing the patronage that is characteristic in some degree of most governments. We certainly do have that on a grand scale; but we are witnessing something far more insidious, far more sinister, and far more destructive to our civil service tradition. What we are witnessing is not the legitimate effort of a government to see that the civil service performs for the government, but what we are witnessing is an attempt to subvert the civil service by making it into a service for an NDP government.

..... continued on next page

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

Now in making this very serious charge I ask the House and the members of the civil service to pay very close attention to the evidence.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, consider the growth of such bodies as Planning and Priorities Committee and the Management Committee of Cabinet. That growth can be measured in money spent, personnel hired, and influence exerted. There are in both bodies a number of able, dedicated career civil servants. Many of the other members are equally able, but along with their ability they possess another important characteristic. They are members or supporters of the NDP and they are explicitly and exclusively committed to its ends.

Mr. Speaker, the effects of this have been several. First of all it has been disruptive of both the planning and administration because between the Cabinet and the line departments have been interposed bodies whose commitment in the main is not to public service but to the New Democratic Party. Many of the failures of policy and administration can be directly traced to that disruption.

Secondly, in consequence of this change, there has been a predictable and intense decline in the morale of the civil service. Men and women who have devoted years of service to this province have been forced to operate in an atmosphere of hostility and suspicion. Many have been afraid to express sincerely held views for fear of reprisals. Many have been made to feel useless, suspect and superfluous, and many have sought early retirement. As one veteran civil servant recently put it to me, the politicization is vicious, unreasonable, blatant and unfair. There is no joy in the public service now. And I submit to you, Sir, that the inevitable result of such an atmosphere is that many civil servants are forced to become adherents of the NDP as a matter of professional survival.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would remind the honourable members of the resolution introduced at the recent NDP Convention calling for the abandonment of the merit system in favour of an outright spoils system. Members of the government had the sense to oppose it publicly. They did not need much political intelligence to do that. But I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that they could in clear conscience oppose it because they did not need it. That resolution was superfluous, Mr. Speaker, because this Cabinet already knows what the Party wants and is providing it.

Thirdly, I would cite the conduct of particular civil servants, and I do this with regret. But this government has inaugurated a practice of having civil servants articulate, formulate and defend the policies of the government. They are making the civil servants immensely vulnerable, and I wonder indeed whether that may not be part of their purpose. Frequently, I suggest, this practice stems from the incompetence of the Ministers in question, but whatever the reason, they are dragging the public service into the political arena and it will be a long road to get them back out.

In light of my earlier comments, we believe that the time has come for economy and restraint to enter into the policy-making of this government.

Now any opposition party which proposes that government spending be cut is always met with the response: which programs would you have us cut? Such a question is a red herring because it presupposes that this ship is so tightly run that cuts could only be made by sacrificing necessary programs. Now the Premier himself gave the lie to that suggestion last spring with his Santa Claus budget, when he conclusively proved that for four years he had been over-taxing the people of Manitoba solely for the purpose of bribing them on the verge of an election.

The estimates for 1974 suggest that he is at it again in that they consistently underestimate the impact that inflation will have on government revenues. But apart from the monies the government is salting away for the next election, there are numerous examples of waste which, if attacked directly, could result in savings sufficient to reduce the tax that most directly affects consumers' prices and costs in the province - and that is the sales tax.

The catalogue is long but necessarily incomplete, because this government treats public information as a private preserve. But let me cite a few examples and pose a few questions:

Research in government departments (and this aside from sub-committees of cabinet) has increased in the last four years from roughly three million dollars to roughly 16 million dollars. Now I am in favour of research and planning and would like to see more of it reflected in actual policy, but we cannot find out how it is spent, who is involved, what is uncovered, and

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . how it relates to policy. In one department grants are handed out to virtually all eligible applicants, no questions asked, no criteria established, no check for duplication. The reason: the establishment of selective grants would create rivalry and tensions between potential recipients. Therefore give it to all comers. So we have those enormous costs which must, in the way they are administered, involve massive duplication and waste.

We have the enormous costs of the mountain of reports for "discussion purposes only." This one is Government Services to the Citizens in the Scandinavian Countries, A Report. This one is called The Rise of the Sparrow - a Paper on Corrections in Manitoba. This was called The White Paper on Health Policy, completed after the government announced its community health centres. As far as I know they now have a committee examining the health white paper, they have a Planning and Priorities Committee examining the examination by the committee on the health white paper. --(Interjection)-- Well, I wonder if it's really as funny as the honourable member suggests. Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of Manitoba have paid for these reports and for all intents and purposes they may go there. We have the Planning and Priorities Committee and the Management . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If the honourable gentlemen will have their . . . Order please. Does the Honourable House Leader have a point of order?

MR. GREEN: I think, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Member for Lakeside would be the one who would say that I shirk my responsibility if I did not stand up at this point. A certain amount of eloquence, a certain amount of--well let's put it in its best light--a certain amount of --(Interjection)--Yes, I'm making a point of order. Theatrics I can accept from any member, but the honourable member deliberately took the material on his desk and threw it over on to the floor of the House, and I don't think that that is an acceptable practice, Mr. Speaker. I think that his solicitude for the civil service should apply to the members of the House and to the member that now has to get on his hands and knees to pick up those documents.

MR. SPEAKER: I would suggest that the decorum of this House will be that which the members themselves desire, and I think that on that note I should ask that all members reflect on their actions in this House. The honourable member state his point of order.

MR. GREEN: Yes, the Honourable Member from Morris asked me to cite the rule which prevents doing what the honourable member did. The honourable member, who is a Parliamentarian, knows that rules are made within the ambit of what honourable members making them consider to be matters which would come out in common sense, and that there is no rule, for instance, that one does not spit on the floor, because nobody would have expected that anybody would do a thing like that and the honourable member knows it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that I am as concerned as the House Leader about the rules of the House and about the decorum. Mr. Speaker, on the next occasion I'll ask for a waste paper basket.

Mr. Speaker, we have . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. I wonder if I may suggest to the honourable members that they all contain themselves. We have eight days of this speech; they'll all have an opportunity. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, we have the Planning and Priorities Committee and the Management Committee of Cabinet - I have referred to them already - with all their consultants, researchers, planners and their supplies, and there they sit, spinning their wheels at immense public cost.

We have the Government Air Service, the use and abuse of government planes by Ministers and others.

We have vast increases in the number of civil servants travelling within and without this province.

We have the proliferation of the civil service in the Department of Northern Affairs.

We have the costs of extended care patients occupying acute-care hospital beds at great cost and as a result of the failure in government planning.

We have the Information Communications program which costs the province \$500,000 annually and most of which should probably be charged to the New Democratic Party budget.

We have great increases in government advertising, self-promotion and propaganda.

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . Indeed, Mr. Speaker, this fall we had the Premier threatening to use public advertising in his vendetta with the doctors, and the government actually using it to interfere - ineffectively - in the rapeseed marketing vote.

We have the enormous losses of government owned businesses.

Are we seriously to be told that these are all productive expenditures? And are we seriously to be told that there aren't enormous savings to be made in these areas?

Well, Mr. Speaker, from what I have said, it should now be clear that if we press this government to open up, we are talking in the first instance of asking that this House and the people of this province be taken into the government's confidence; that we be provided with data, with information, with explanations and analyses of the options before the government, and with the resources to undertake our analyses.

But as I have already indicated, we are asking for more. We want the publication of the Public Accounts speeded up. We want greater consistency in the Public Accounts so that expenditures may be compared from year to year; we want far more detailed information in the Estimates; we want line-by-line open budgeting in the Financial Statements of the Universities, the Utilities and the Crown Corporations. We want a Standing Committee on Public Corporations so that the wholly-owned corporations and businesses will have their management report directly to this House and be examined directly by this House.

Mr. Speaker, we in this country count ourselves lucky to have been spared a Watergate. We may all hope that this belief has not been misplaced; we may all agree, however, that under our system a government or a Prime Minister would long since have fallen in similar circumstances. There is, however, one fact that should temper any complacency that we may feel on this subject. The fact is that the Legislature in our parliamentary system presently lacks the power and the investigative resources enjoyed by the American Congress. The growth of Cabinet government and the relative inflexibility of party lines in this country make it difficult - except in conditions of minority government - for the Legislature to compel the Executive to provide information that it does not wish to provide, or to do things that it does not wish to do.

We on this side are not looking for a Watergate. But we are increasingly concerned, especially when facing an evasive and secretive government, that this House and its committees do not possess the information nor the resources upon which to base the kind of examination of government policies that the public is entitled to expect. Nowhere is this more true than in respect of the finances of this province. The official opposition has at its disposal approximately \$10,000 with which to engage in research and examination of estimates of six or seven hundred million. Even if those estimates were detailed, even if those estimates could be easily related to the most recent public accounts, such examination would be exceedingly difficult. In the form in which they are received, however, effective scrutiny by the Legislature is almost impossible, and examination by the public completely impossible. And yet if, as I would suggest, policy and administration are the essence of government, what straits are we in, Mr. Speaker, when realistically examination of the financial administration has become impossible?

Now I can anticipate the First Minister and other Ministers will defend themselves by citing past practices in this province and present practices elsewhere. Our reply is simple: we know what was done in the past, we know what is done elsewhere. But to cite such practices is to offer a rationalization, not an argument. The simple fact is this, Mr. Speaker: what we have done in the past and what continues to be done elsewhere is simply not good enough. Indeed, it is no good at all, it is not "good" at all, for it fosters the illusion that the people and the Legislature are in control, whereas the fact is that where public expenditures are concerned we are, relatively speaking, knowing less and less about more and more. I think I do not exaggerate, Mr. Speaker, when I say that upon our ability to devise means of opening government and government's financial operations to the people, may depend the very survival of those forms, traditions and institutions which embody parliamentary democracy and responsible government as we have known it.

So long as we have the voices with which to speak and people who will listen, we on this side intend to persist on this issue in this chamber and outside. This in itself would save the taxpayers money. We would, frankly, be delighted to see the government defuse the issue by moving, and moving quickly, to let the sun shine in. But if they don't, I say to them,

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . Mr. Speaker: I earnestly believe that on this issue we have public support, and that support will grow in direct proportion to the government's refusal to let the facts be known.

The present government is culpable, Mr. Speaker, because it came to office employing the rhetoric of openness, but in practice has been just as secretive and possibly more so than its predecessors. Indeed while they have relied on rhetoric, they have in fact been masters of duplicity and deceit. Despite the Premier's assurance on Autopac rates, we now face a rate increase. Besides ignoring his earlier commitment, we are implicitly asked to believe that Autopac deficit was unknown to the government prior to the election. Well, Mr. Speaker, anyone who believes that will believe anything.

We are told that the hog marketing contract with Japan is a good one and represents a good deal for our producers, yet the government refuses to make the contract available to the producers. If that deal is so good, why such reluctance to publish the contract? And again I say that anyone who accepts the government's word on this will accept anything.

Similarly, we have repeatedly in recent years asked for more complete information on government operations in the business sector; we have asked for indications of the direction of government policies, the tabling of reports, the studies, the data upon which policies will be based. Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had the reports - my lord, we've had the reports and I have many of them in front of me - now sitting collecting dust, unread, unsung and unlamented. They are in themselves characteristic of this government. When it does not know what to do, it commissions a report. When it does not know what to do with the report, it commissions a task force to study the report, and when it does not know what to do with the study it pleads confidentiality. And while this is going on the Legislature and the public are in a quandary as to the policy and the government is praying that the problem itself will go away. Rarely, Mr. Speaker, if ever, has a government issued so many reports "for discussion purposes only" and where it does have a policy the parenthood is, to put it euphemistically, usually in doubt.

In asking that the bases of policy formulation be made clear and explicit, let there be no mistake or doubt as to our reasons. They are very simple. We hold this government accountable for gross failures of both policy and administration. Policy and administration. That, when everything is said and done, is what government is all about. Yet the failure of rational planning has led to consistent and pervasive failures in both policy and administration.

That in turn has led to a great deal of tinkering and agitation and confrontation. Indeed, the series of confrontations with the doctors, with hog producers, with hospital personnel, with the MGEA - these confrontations begin to become intelligible and indeed unavoidable.

Now the matter of the doctors is a case in point. I doubt if we'll ever know for certain, but one might reasonably guess that more man hours have been spent on this dispute in the last four months than on virtually all other government enterprises put together. And when I say that, I am not alone speaking merely of ministerial time, but of the time of large numbers of highly qualified and highly-paid people in the civil service and the various committees attached to Cabinet. I do not assert that sole responsibility for that lies with government. I do assert, however, that over the past four and one half years the government had the opportunity through planning and consultation to have ensured that this confrontation never take place. By failing to plan, by failing to consult, by failing to formulate policy unambiguously and administer it competently, this government stands culpable of gross failures. It has needlessly wasted the energies of many men and women, on both sides of the issue, and created a needless sense of public apprehension about the future of medical services. But secondly--and as a result--it has neglected the real problems. Mr. Speaker, it has failed to deal with the escalation in hospital costs, and imposing an eight percent ceiling on them is not an answer because it deals with the symptoms and not the causes of the problem.

This government has been too distracted, moreover, to deal with the quality of health care. No attention has been paid to the need to devise means of encouraging doctors and dentists to locate in rural areas. No attention has been given to the need to provide incentives for doctors and dentists to travel in rural areas in the north. No thought has been given to the question as to whether our medical and dental schools are producing personnel in sufficient numbers for rural and northern needs. No planning or policy has been developed for the provision of extended care facilities, with the result that our major hospitals are packed with patients who should be elsewhere, and with the further result that something like the tragic

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . fire in Winnipeg three weeks ago became a controversy as well as a tragedy.

Well, what should have been happening in these wasted barren years? What would we have done? We'd have long since moved to develop regional health centres. We would have long since developed a program of incentive grants similar to those handled by the health program for underserved areas in the Local Health Services branches in Ontario. With such a program we would now be well on our way to meeting the needs of rural and northern areas for medical practitioners.

We would have long since brought ambulance service under Medicare, and we would now be undertaking the quick acquisition, Mr. Speaker, and --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, I must tell the First Minister. Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned this for years and I have mentioned this as well in the election. The problem, Mr. Speaker, the problem, Mr. Speaker, is that the government isn't listening. They are too wrapped up in the fact that three years ago they announced a community health centre program in the Speech from the Throne and now come hell or high water, we may have both in this province, we are going to have to have that program implemented. Mr. Speaker, we would have at the present time, in view of what we consider the emergency, we would have undertaken and would suggest that the government undertake the acquisition of building space for ready conversion to extended care use.

Mr. Speaker, early in my remarks I referred to the recent changes in the Cabinet and expressed our hope that the members of the Ministry will discharge their responsibilities diligently and well. That is not, however, all I have to say on the subject of the Cabinet itself. My first additional comments must relate to the position of the Ministry vis-a-vis this House. More than two months ago at a press conference I predicted the Premier would delay these changes, the Cabinet changes, until the eve of the Session; and that way the new Ministers might hope to evade their responsibilities to this House by pleading inexperience in their new departments. Let me serve notice now that we on this side do not propose to let them wriggle off the hook in that way. And I say that for several reasons. The Premier has known for seven months that he must reorganize the government. If in the next few months his Ministers find themselves slowly twisting in the wind, that will be the Premier's fault and not ours. In the case of Health and Social Development the new Minister has been determining policies from above for some time, and any claim to innocence will now ring hollow. Finally, we will not excuse the new Minister of Tourism and Recreation on the grounds of inexperience, because he has already demonstrated in his case no amount of experience is a substitute for competence.

In noting changes within the Cabinet, we must note the widespread reports that the First Minister was looking to the election results to enable him to restructure the Cabinet. We share his disappointment but we, after all, only have to face his Ministers; he must work with them.

If the First Minister is disappointed at seeing so many of the old faces on his side, one can imagine his disappointment and anger at seeing so many, old and new, on this side. The First Minister, of course, believed that the election would provide him with an unprecedented mandate and that the election would see the rout and destruction of the Party I have the honour to lead. To be taken in by your own propaganda, Mr. Speaker, is a dangerous thing for a politician, and the First Minister was taken in badly, and this was reflected, Mr. Speaker, in everything he said and did - all the way from the budget when the campaign began, to a mid-summer night's scream in Russell.

By the First Minister's reckoning, anyone who opposes or criticizes him is malicious. That term apparently applies to nearly half the members of this Assembly and to a large majority of the voters. But the government should be aware, Mr. Speaker, that we and the public shall be particularly vigilant about the way the government deals with problems in constituencies represented by the honourable members on this side. And at the first sign that the Premier is carrying out his threats against constituencies that had the temerity to vote against him, let the First Minister be forewarned that he will then learn what the word 'opposition' really means. Bully-boy tactics did not stampede the electors of Manitoba and they are not going to stampede the honourable members on this side of the House.

We do not intend, Mr. Speaker, to remain passive in the face of threatened reprisals, of dark mutterings about dossiers being kept by the Premier. Nor shall we remain silent when members of the government bring shame upon this House and upon the whole process of politics in Manitoba. In the past, we have urged the First Minister to curb the excesses of his colleagues.

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

But he has shown no inclination to accept the responsibility that goes with his leadership, the responsibility to set standards of competence and behaviour for his ministers to meet. The First Minister must share with every other member of this House the dishonour that his Minister of Northern Affairs has brought upon us. That a minister of the Crown must be hailed into court because the dishonesty of his statements surpassed simple exaggeration, and because his failure to respect the citizens surpassed mere discourtesy, and then for him to show such little knowledge of the meaning of his words as to defend himself by saying, "When I said robbery I meant something else." Would the First Minister suggest that this brings credit to this House or to the government?

That would be bad enough, Mr. Speaker, more than bad enough, if it were an isolated case. But it has happened before in this House and with this government. The former Attorney-General stood cheerfully in this House, protected by the privileges we enjoy here, and actively slandered the members of the legal profession in Brandon. The First Minister himself early in his term went campaigning in another province and talked loosely about "kickbacks", and then he explained when he said "kickbacks", he did not really mean "kickbacks", but something quite different.

Mr. Speaker, I have stood in this House before and asked the First Minister to take stock of what he and his friends are doing. I have warned him that they are debasing the standards of public life in Manitoba by their intemperance. But the tone of the statements these men make tells of more than a mere lack of precision in the choice of words. It reflects a failure to respect the people of Manitoba, for he has said in effect that those who shared our beliefs were to have, not the rights and services that every Manitoban may claim from the government, but special treatment - few roads, less help to build their communities, less consideration from the First Minister and his friends.

Now I will not try to appeal to the First Minister by telling him that the statement, and the fact that he made the statement, should be a cause of shame to him and to his Party. I have asked him for courtesy too often in the past to hope that he would ever understand. But he does understand electoral results, Mr. Speaker. And so I would say to him, let us have no more talk of "shysters" and of "malicious men". Let the government, especially its First Minister, speak in a way that reflects the dignity and the importance of public office in this province. --(Interjection)-- So I wonder, Mr. Speaker, --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, it ill behoves the Minister of Finance, having used the word "shyster" to suggest anything to me at this point.

MR. CHERNIACK: I've never used it in that sense . . .

MR. SPIVAK: Well, I know, but your First Minister did, and as far as I know I've never heard any rebuttal of that. --(Interjection)-- Let the government . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. SPIVAK: . . . and especially its First Minister speak in a way that reflects the dignity and the importance of public office in this province. The other is shameful, and if that does not move the First Minister, it also costs him votes, and men who may soon face their electorate might do well to think of that.

If the First Minister adopts courtesy, Mr. Speaker, and in suggesting that, I am not suggesting that he abandon frankness, then we can work together in this House, and that will benefit all of us and all of the people who elected us, and it will benefit public life in Manitoba.

By now, Mr. Speaker, it should be clear that this government does not have our confidence. The light burns in the window, and even the vilest sinner may return, and we hope, Sir, that this will yet happen. But the evidence of repentance and wisdom is not to be found in this government's record, and certainly not to be found in this Throne Speech.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Lakeside, that the motion be amended by adding to it the following words:

But this House regrets:

(a) that the government has not effected savings in its administration and has failed to control and reduce its expenditures to the end that the sales tax might be eliminated on

(i) all clothing and second-hand goods;

(ii) all items under the retail price of one dollar;

(iii) all restaurant meal prices under three dollars; and

(iv) all building supplies,

THRONE SPEECH

(MR. SPIVAK Cont'd)

Thereby reducing the cost of living for the citizens of Manitoba, particularly low income families; and

(b) that the government has failed to institute proper public accountability with line-by-line budgeting in the estimates, full disclosure of the Public Accounts, and the financial statements of the universities and the Crown corporations; and

(c) that the government has failed to strengthen the authority, independence and terms of reference of the Provincial Auditor such as to create an office of Auditor General; and

(d) that the government has not followed a policy of making available to all public boards and commissions such documents, reports and agreements to which their members are within their terms of reference entitled; and

(e) that the government has eroded the tradition of a non partisan civil service, and through widespread and indiscriminate use of patronage has undermined the merit system within the civil service; and

(f) that the government has failed to honour its commitment to institute a judicial inquiry into the Nelson River project.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Liberal Party House Leader, the Member for Portage la Prairie, that debate be now adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker - I was rather amused, Mr. Speaker, over the sophistication of the division of labour that has arisen, and I would move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture, that the House do now adjourn, and will meet across the hall in the Members' Lounge for the committee sitting.

MR. SPEAKER: Moved by the Honourable House Leader, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, that the House do now adjourn. Are you ready for the question? Agreed? So ordered. The House is accordingly adjourned.

Oh, I'm sorry, I wish to make an announcement before I adjourn the House. For the benefit of those who are new members, and, of course, any others who wish to participate, there will be a briefing on Thursday morning at 10:00 o'clock with the Clerk and myself present and the Assistant Clerk, for those members who wish to participate, in Room 254. -- (Interjection)-- Conduct of members, new members.

The House is accordingly adjourned and stands adjourned until --(Interjection)-- the House is accordingly adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 Tuesday afternoon.